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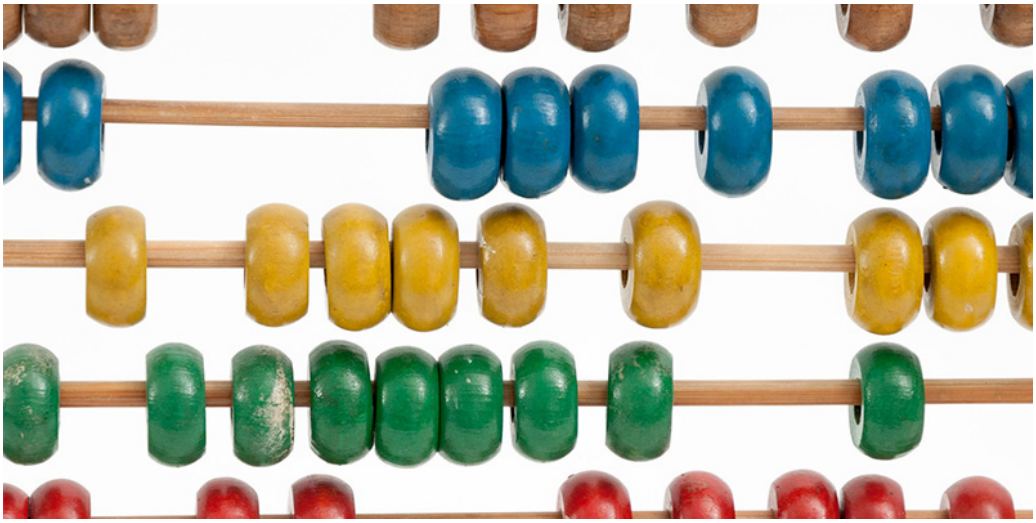


perks of being a sociopath

LEADERSHIP LIFE JULY 7, 2019 6 COMMENTS SHARE 1

growing up i exhibited the usual "boys will be boys" tendencies:

- skateboarding
- troublemaking
- starting fires and keeping a paperback journal of each one

ok, maybe not all the usual stuff.

in this essay i'm going to highlight a few of my idiosyncrasies. if you resonate with the principles, avoid small animals.

memories are a tool

the last entry in my fire journal documents a trick i call "dragon tears."

you light the ink tip of an Expo marker and drip fiery rain onto unsuspecting leaves and kindle. or your inner forearm. this discolored, oval-shaped scar has slid its way down my wrist about a millimeter per month ever since.

i don't regret anything i've ever done, and i've done a lot of not-good stuff. more on "why" in a bit.

people are tools

men, women, friends, colleagues, Twitter followers. each serves a purpose.

men die in wars so women can gossip with friends about colleagues they don't like and Twitter followers they wish they had.

this is why i **threw my network in the trash** last year. here's what else people do when they hang out:

- get fat (drinking, pizza, frozen yogurt by the ounce)
- waste money
- **go to jail**

i don't want to be poor, sloppy, or stupid. i want to achieve. and that requires a sharp mind + absence of poisonous chemicals.

if you're reading this and think "*oh, he's just shy,*" wrong. there's a 99% chance i am funnier and more charming than you at parties.

friends are a waste of time.

animals are tools

i wouldn't write this section if veggie types weren't so insufferable.

God created animals for human exploitation: transport, food, entertainment, whatever. yeah, they probably have feelings, but man did not invent the food chain. we already know what life would be like if **monkeys were in charge**.

while i don't understand the "entertainment" angle (pets), i can appreciate how Michael Vick found an outlet in dog fighting. i also don't believe he should have gone to prison, especially when some child molesters get away with a lighter sentence.

i believe if vegans ruled the world, carnivores like myself would be in Gulags or worse – there would be no meat.

for this reason alone i'm consuming as many tasty animals as possible before cholesterol converts my life insurance policy into cash.

thoughts are a tool

you play chess on a board, i play it with other people.

at night in bed i rehearse conversations i'm anticipating having the next day, considering if/given/when paths each one could "go down" to ensure i have a suitable reaction.

the best phrasing of this characteristic is "being calculated." i simply take it to extremes. planning behaviors in advance is handy whether on a sales call or riding a bicycle down 5th Avenue.

to blend in socially, e.g. during debates or when everyone is drunk, i often insert "uhh" or "hmm yeah" pauses before saying the thing i already had in mind.

one of my biggest turn-offs is detecting absent-mindedness in others. a lack of intentionality behind one's actions disgusts me.

i am a tool

Nassim Taleb says something that resonates:

Time spent on revenge is never wasted.— Nassim Nicholas Taleb (@nntaleb)
June 4, 2019

when i went viral for documenting **how i beat an online scammer**, several readers actually commented they "*wish the other guy won.*"

besides this sentiment being logically *impossible* — me not* winning a chargeback claim would result in me not* writing about my aggressive tactics to win — the episode illustrated that i will always do whatever it takes [to win].

normal people do not want to compete against someone who will do whatever it takes to beat them. it makes Normals feel inadequate, and one will do anything they can to avoid facing their own inadequacies.

so people are sort of like animals in this way. they may be exploited for transport,

food (mental nourishment), entertainment, whatever.

transparency is a tool

the irony of wearing my "heart" on my sleeve is i don't really have one.

it took little effort to share in my other posts, for example, that i have **mental disabilities** or gave my wife an ultimatum against **business school** or write **mediocre music**.

readers email me, "i was so touched by what you said about Y," and i kind of chuckle. every story in the world can be told with a different combination of 26 letters, and every human emotion can be elicited + exploited for gain with a combination of a few 100 words.

i have a small fan club that hangs onto my ideas and looks to me for inspiration to achieve. what i've realized about this group is they are more likely to share my work when they think it took a lot of guts to make it.

"guts" is just saying what you think, 100% of the time.

faith is a tool

i tried reading Becker's *Denial of Death* but didn't get it.

it's worth mentioning i am a Christian, thus i believe when i die i'll go to Heaven. whether you're a believer or not, i'm confident you can appreciate that if there *is* a Heaven, it is a much better place than Earth.

so i'm not afraid of dying, i'm afraid of dying slowly.

occasionally i think i "pity" non-believers. see, Christians believe those who do not accept Jesus Christ into their hearts, repent for their sin, and commit to living a life dedicated to His glory will go to hell.

on the other hand, sometimes i encounter people who seem to deserve it (Hell). this sentiment, thankfully, is advised against in the bible.

verses to consider:

1. "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."
2. "Vengeance is mine."

3. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

i'm mostly apathetic toward other religions, except when they compel followers to blow up children or decapitate journalists.

if you're not sure how to process these ideas, maybe **i can help**.

handicaps are tools

i've written about my **Tourette Syndrome**, **OCD**, and **Insomnia**. consider this piece the crown jewel.

when someone tells me a "sad" or "unfortunate" story i do something like:

1. wait 2 seconds
2. study their eyes / cheeks
3. mirror the gesture

if you do this enough at a bar you'll be called a "good listener" and "easy to talk to." do this enough in your early 20's and you'll be able to **travel full-time** and **retire**.

perhaps the reason i don't feel sorry for anyone's problems is because i turned mine into superpowers.

suffering is a tool

i am deeply annoyed by injustice.

but if a friend, say, gets hit by a truck, i'm the guy at his funeral wondering when i can leave.

that's not to say i'm unwilling to make sacrifices for others. for example, in high school a Russian kid in my orchestra class, Stas, died tragically. he was a year my senior, valedictorian, and a genius. i played violin at his funeral.

to this day i would happily trade places with Stas so he could live.

solitude is a tool

suppose you work 9-5 and a couple times per week hang out with friends.

you repeat this routine for dozens of years until you stop breathing. if you have kids the 9-5 will remain but hangouts will be replaced by family drama.

in this period i reckon your best moments will be when you're home alone, watching a film or listening to music or reading about Kanye West's 2024 campaign platform.

meditate on this with me: we enjoy ourselves the most when we're alone.

after 10 years of living in major cities (Atlanta – New York – San Francisco) i came to the conclusion that the more time you spend with other people, the less comfortable you are being by yourself.

in my free time i enjoy staring at ceilings, learning mental frameworks, memorizing offensive jokes, and listening to scary stories.

feelings are a tool

my brain cracks when someone says "i feel..." followed by something logical.

"*i feel like we should have a 14 day free trial instead of 7 days*"

i think, i do not feel. but since we're living in a post-fact world run by emotions, occasionally i start sentences with the term to get what i want.

know your audience.

controversy is a tool

when i decided to elope instead of a proper wedding + bachelor party + best man situation, friends were *pissed*.

to make matters worse i didn't tell most people about the elopement until it was over, so they couldn't congratulate me properly either. incidentally their reaction was the best wedding gift they could have given me.

they say it's moments like this where you learn who your real friends are. instead i learned who is fragile and butt-hurt about Things that Don't Matter.

Ryan has always marched to the beat of his own drum, and he always will.

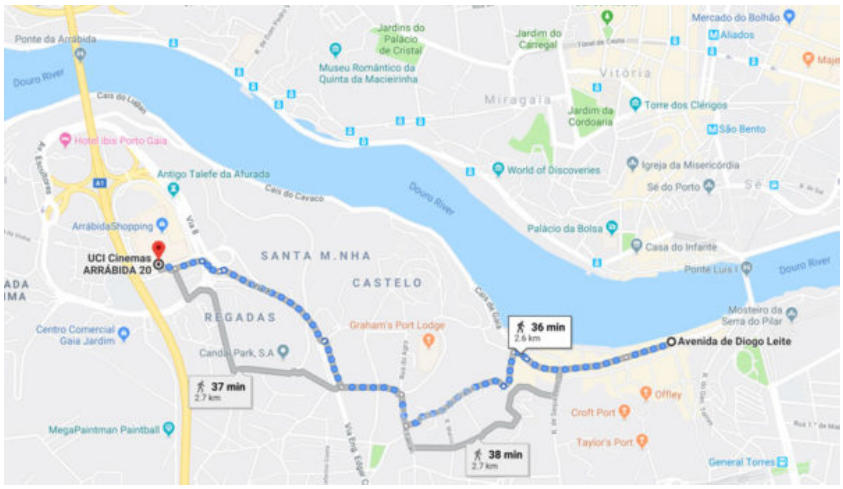
personality is a tool

there's a joke about how the popular Myers-Briggs personality test is just "horoscopes for smart people." i disagree.

when my test yielded the `ENTJ` descriptor, things "clicked."

- compulsion to be punctual,
- abrasiveness towards incompetence,
- treating random phone calls, even at 3am, as "likely new business opportunities" that must be answered at all costs.

recently i was late to see *John Wick III* with my wife (she lost a bet) so i made us run 2 miles, up a hill, to make it on time. we did and Keanu's headshots were excellent.



many of the best CEOs, dictators, presidents, and even fictional characters are ENTJ, although we make up just 2% of the population. you're welcome.

compound my habits, handicaps, personal faith, and tendencies developed since childhood... is it just a horoscope? you decide.

summaries are a tool

here i leave you, without answers or a solution. just remember: it didn't take a lot of guts to write this.

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6 COMMENTS

Antonio
JULY 7, 2019 AT 2:46 PM

This explains a lot.

REPLY ↓

Donald
JULY 7, 2019 AT 6:36 PM

I hope you keep "winning" Ryan. And then realise there is nobody there with you to celebrate and that in the end "winning" is meaningless if you're alone

REPLY ↓

Ryan Kulp
JULY 7, 2019 AT 6:57 PM

great interpretation Donald

REPLY ↓

Dina
JULY 7, 2019 AT 7:32 PM

It sounds like you're a textbook narcissist (more so than a sociopath) – I'd consider looking into it

REPLY ↓

Tim
JULY 7, 2019 AT 8:07 PM

Great post. Made me think.

Have a nsg friend that needs to go.

REPLY ↓

J Kulp
JULY 8, 2019 AT 7:53 AM

Oh my..... I'm speechless and sad at the same time!

REPLY ↓

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